

General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids Grants

Application Overview - Deadline 2/1/2006

Overview

The American Dietetic Association Foundation, the President's Challenge, and the General Mills Foundation are partnering to improve youth nutrition and fitness. The initiative, "General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids," consists of grants to community based groups. Three additional components of the initiative include sponsorship of the President's Active Lifestyle Awards, developing nutrition and fitness mentoring models, and sharing best practices.

Grants

Fifty grants (\$10,000 each) will be awarded in May 2006.

Goal

The goal of the General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids grants is to encourage communities in the United States to improve the eating and physical activity patterns of young people, ages 2-20. Grants will be awarded to 501(c)(3) and 509(a) status not-for-profit organizations and agencies working with communities that demonstrate the greatest need and likelihood of sustainable impact on young people's nutrition and activity levels through innovative programs.

Background

The General Mills Foundation will award 50 grants, \$10,000 each, to not-for-profit organizations with innovative programs that help youth develop good nutrition and fitness habits. Utilizing its resources and expertise on nutrition issues, the American Dietetic Association Foundation will play a critical role in evaluating the proposals. The President's Challenge will provide a model program, the President's Active Lifestyle Award, as part of the initiative.

The partnership and the grants were developed for several reasons.

- Youth need optimal nutrition and fitness for growth and development during childhood and adolescence, as well as for their long-term health.
- A healthy diet and exercise help young people improve school performance, establish positive health habits, and prevent diseases of adulthood.
- Programs aimed at improving nutrition and physical activity levels with youth can have a long-term impact on young people's health and well-being throughout their life span.
- Community initiated programs are most likely to change behavior and sustain behavior change.

Model Programs in Nutrition and Physical Activity with Young People

As part of the partnership, the General Mills Foundation, the American Dietetic Association Foundation and the President's Challenge, with help from the University of Minnesota's Division of Epidemiology, have collaborated resources to develop an extensive list of model nutrition and physical activity programs. These model programs are accessible online via www.generalmills.com/foundation and www.adaf.org. Although there are multiple programs that have demonstrated success with young people in nutrition and physical activity, the programs on the Web sites are highlighted because the program materials are available and could be adapted for your setting. Resources for rigorously evaluated programs are accessible online via www.generalmills.com/foundation and www.adaf.org. Applicants may choose to adapt one or two components from any of these programs or develop their own programs. In addition the 2005 Champions grants recipients, found on the Community Action Web site (www.generalmills.com/foundation) may also provide ideas for applicants.

Elements of Successful Nutrition and Fitness Programs

Grants are limited to organizations with 501(c)(3) or 509(a) status. Local organizations that work with children are encouraged to apply because programs linked to existing and ongoing community organizations' programs are more likely to be sustainable. These may include schools, park districts, Native American tribes, municipal organizations, YMCA's, Boys & Girls clubs, etc. In addition, grants will be awarded to programs for

demonstrating significant potential impact on youth groups that are at risk or for having an impact on large populations of youth. The interest of the General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids grants program is in serving youth, and therefore proposals that keep administrative costs and overhead low in relationship to the number of youth served will be more favorably evaluated.

In designing a proposal, it is important to demonstrate the potential of the proposed program to change nutrition and physical activity behaviors based on behavior change models or on previously successful programs. Evidence of how each of these areas will be addressed should be part of submitted proposals.

Target Audience

A target audience should be selected. Do you want to target preschool, elementary, middle school, or high school students, or Women, Infants and Children (WIC)? What is the target audience's educational setting? Do you want to focus the program on females or a specific racial/ethnic group? Your target audience needs to be determined before you decide on your program.

Behavioral Objectives

It is important to be very clear about the behavioral objectives of your program. For example, do you want to increase whole grain intake of pre-school children or do you want to increase fruit and vegetable intake of elementary school children? Do you want to increase physical activity levels among young teenage girls? The behavioral objectives of your program will guide its development. These objectives should not be too broad, because a more focused program is much more likely to be successful. Each program should have at least one nutrition objective and at least one physical activity objective.

Influencing Factors

There are key factors that influence young people's behavior patterns. Which factors are most relevant to the behavior you have selected? Below are some examples of key factors that have been shown to be most important in prior research. Successful programs generally focus on changes in just a few (less than six) of the components that fall under these factors, such as skills or opportunities or incentives. These can either guide program selection or be used to improve existing programs.

- Personal Factors – How does your target audience view the behaviors you want to promote? What functions do nutrition and physical activity serve for them? What else is more important to them in their lives? What personal value can you tap to attract and influence your audience?
- Behavioral Factors – What is your target audience already doing that might be compatible (or incompatible) with healthier eating and physical activity patterns? What specific skills do they need to learn and practice? Can you provide some incentives or rewards to attract and encourage them? What will keep their interest in the program?
- Social Factors – Are there some role models you can bring into the program that would be interesting or attractive to the target audience? Can parents and peers be brought in to provide social support for those in the program?
- Environmental Factors -- Can you increase the opportunities for your target audience to eat a balanced diet and engage in more physical activity?

Program Content and Structure

Is the program sufficient in scope or intensity to be able to achieve changes in behavior? Based on the studies of successful programs, it is important to consider the following processes as part of selecting and developing nutrition and physical activity programs.

- Length of Program – Does each young person have enough sessions or hours of the program to make sustained changes in their behavior? Is the program more than one event, that is, a series of events or opportunities that take place over a period of months so that each young person can be involved multiple times?
- Reach/Depth of Program – How many young people or families will be involved in the program? Will all young people in a given neighborhood, class at school, or out-of-school group be involved? As more young people are involved, are there more opportunities for social support, more healthy role models, and the chance that healthy eating and physical activity can become the "norm"?
- Appropriateness of Program – Is the program tailored to the needs of the target audience? How has it taken into account the age, gender, race/ethnicity of your audience? Would your audience consider the program fun, creative, engaging, and interesting?

Recommended Practices

Proposed programs should reflect the practices and concepts recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 and the American Dietetic Association. The program should be designed to focus on positive

behaviors and messages rather than negative ones. For example, does the program communicate in a way that motivates participants to change dietary behavior? Does the program focus on helping the participants eat an overall balanced diet rather than avoiding specific foods? Does the program focus on long-term changes in eating behaviors and physical activity? You can find copies of the American Dietetic Association's position papers at www.eatright.com/positions.html. The most applicable position papers will be under the Consumer Education category (Total Diet Approach to Communicating Food and Nutrition Information and Food and Nutrition Misinformation).

Staffing

To ensure that the nutrition and physical fitness information in the proposed program is accurate and is scientifically based, a Registered Dietitian (RD) must either be directly involved or serve as an advisor to the program. If you need help in locating a dietetics professional in your area, go to the American Dietetic Association's Web site at www.eatright.org and click on "Find a Dietitian."

Program Guidelines

The information presented here is an overview of the General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids grants program guidelines. All applicants should review the background information and resources that can be accessed online via www.generalmills.com/foundation and www.adaf.org.

Evaluation Methods

In order to be able to assess the successes of a program, evaluation methods should be included in the proposal. There are excellent resources to evaluate both nutrition and physical activity programs, such as those that are accessible online via www.generalmills.com/foundation and www.adaf.org. Because of the size of the programs, emphasis should be given to 1) documenting the program, 2) collecting process data to measure the success of the program, and 3) providing data on potential nutrition and physical activity outcomes.

1) Program Documentation

Each proposal should include a plan to take photographs of program events. Professional photography is not expected. Pictures should be snapshots of young people participating in the program. Permission should be obtained, in writing, from those who are photographed.

2) Evaluation

Accurate information on how the program will be implemented needs to be recorded. This should be based on specific behavioral objectives outlined in your proposal. Data on changes in behavior of those who participate in the program should be collected and reported. The young people in the program can be surveyed, for example, prior to and after completing the program. The Champions grants evaluation form and more information on model surveys and suggested questions for different age groups are accessible online via www.generalmills.com/foundation and www.adaf.org. Other outcome measures may also be suggested when the grants are funded and may be used across all the General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids grants.

Questions

It is anticipated that the detailed proposal guidelines in this Request For Proposals (RFP) and the background and resource information accessible online via www.generalmills.com/foundation and www.adaf.org should provide applicants answers to questions regarding how to complete grant applications. However, if after reviewing both the RFP, Web site information and Frequently Asked Questions you still have any questions regarding the General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids grants, please contact Elizabeth Puga at 312-899-4803 or epuga@eatright.org.

Selection Committee

Successful programs will be selected by the Selection Committee made up of representatives from the American Dietetic Association Foundation, the General Mills Foundation and other nutrition and fitness experts.

For more detailed information regarding the General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids grants background and resource information, visit the General Mills Foundation Web site at www.generalmills.com/foundation. For more information on physical activity/fitness awards programs, visit the President's Challenge Web site at www.presidentschallenge.org. For information on nutrition and health, visit the American Dietetic Association's Web site, the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals at <http://www.eatright.org>.

Selection Criteria

Requirements

Proposals that do not meet the following requirements will be disqualified.

- Organizations must have 501(c)(3) or 509(a) status.
- Applicants must follow the grant proposal guidelines in this RFP and have read the background and resource information that can be accessed on www.generalmills.com/foundation and www.adaf.org.
- The program should have impact on an appropriate target audience (ages 2-20).
- The program must engage a registered dietitian.
- The proposal should reflect the practices and concepts recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2000 and the American Dietetic Association.
- The program should include at least one nutrition behavioral objective and at least one physical activity behavioral objective.
- Applicant must agree to complete and submit a Midcourse Progress Report and a Final Evaluation Form if awarded a grant.
- Programs should be implemented within one year and completed by September 2007.

Judging

Grant awards will be based on proposals that demonstrate:

- the greatest need
- the most innovation
- the greatest likelihood of sustainable impact on the groups they are serving

An expert Selection Committee will use these three overarching criteria to evaluate the proposals. While they will judge each proposal as a whole, the judges will also assess each of the following considerations under each of the criteria.

- Greatest Need
 - Demonstrates need for funding
 - Target audience's nutrition and physical activity needs
 - Population under-served by existing programs
- Most Innovation
 - Innovative
 - Creative use of budget
 - Appropriate and creative evaluation methods
 - Innovative enhancement of existing support or program
 - Inventive program scope
- Greatest Likelihood of Sustainable Impact
 - Well-chosen behavioral objectives
 - Cost effective (number of youth served related to budget and low administrative and overhead costs)
 - Appropriate educational setting
 - Comprehensive program scope
 - Likelihood of sustainability once the grant period is over (program and behaviors)
 - Demonstrates significant potential impact on at-risk youth groups or for large populations of youth

Completed proposals must be completed and submitted online no later than Feb. 1, 2006.

The General Mills Foundation and the American Dietetic Association Foundation cannot be responsible for late or incomplete grant applications. Grant applications will become the property of the General Mills Foundation and the American Dietetic Association Foundation. The General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids grants application forms should be completed and submitted online via www.generalmills.com/foundation and www.adaf.org.

Applicants will be notified of results in May 2006 by electronic mail.

Thank you for participating in the General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids initiative, a partnership of the American Dietetic Association Foundation, the President's Challenge and the General Mills Foundation.